

Alexandria Commission on Information Technology

Minutes
March 8, 2010 Meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM

Members present: Nina Balia, Daniel Brooks, Kostas Liopiros, Page Moon, Helen Morris, , Lynda Rudd, Marie Schuler, Bob Soltys

Excused: Philip Acosta, Steve Cooper, Catherine Hogan, Councilwoman Alicia Hughes, Deb Roepke (for Del Pepper)

City Staff present: Tom Trobridge, Suellen Savukas

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 11 and February 17, 2010 meetings were approved unanimously.

Recommendations on Internet and Broadband Access

The Chair, Kostas Liopiros, reviewed the discussions of the January meeting regarding Internet and broadband access and use in the City and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS).

The members discussed the need for the City to have data regarding citizen's access to and use of the Internet and broadband to utilize City services. It was noted that the City does not have a point-of-contact or staff responsible for following this issue. It was agreed at the last meeting that the Commission should develop and forward a recommendation to City Council. Helen Morris agreed to draft a policy recommendation for consideration at the next meeting in May.

Google Fiber Optic Trial

The Commission discussed the Google Fiber for Community Project and the request for proposals (RFPs) to cities to participate in a pilot project. Tom Trobridge provided a memo from the City Manager to City Council regarding responding to the RFP.

Kostas Liopiros noted that Google's decision to build an ultrahigh-speed network comes amid increased national attention to broadband Internet access. Their proposal is in response to the National Broadband Plan being developed at the request of Congress, which is to be unveiled next week.

Google proposes to provide only broadband Internet access -- and not video services. Google states that they will provide one gigabit per second (Gbps) service at a “competitive price” and the network will be open to other Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to use to provide services.

A main benefit of the Google project, where it to be built *throughout* Alexandria, is the potential to stir competitive investments by other wire line broadband providers. This is consistent with Google’s strategy (to encourage use of their services) and with Alexandria’s position (to encourage competition).

The consensus in the Commission is that City Council should respond to Google indicating Alexandria’s interest in being one of the test sites and move forward with the application. There are positive benefits to be gained should Alexandria be selected (and Google indeed go through with the project).

FY 2011 IT Plan Review

The ITS staff briefed the Commission on the City’s draft Information Technology Plan for FY2011-FY2016 at a special meeting on February 17. The staff answered additional questions on the IT Plan from Commission members. Kostas Liopiros requested that any comments or edits on the plan be forwarded to him for inclusion in the Commission’s review of the plan. All members agreed to hold a special meeting on February 17 to approve the report.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.